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ABSTRACT

This report outlines the activities of the chairman of the Speech Department of San Francisco State College during the 1968-69 postdoctoral fellowship year. The year's study was divided between the Studies in Nonverbal Behavior Department of Langley Porter Neuropsychiatric Institute and the Education Policy Research Center of Stanford Research Institute. Work at the first location led to the design of a study exploring the differences between individuals in their ability to interpret facial displays of emotion. At the Educational Policy Research Center, the chairman was involved in studies of student protests in general and of the student and faculty strike at San Francisco College. He was also involved in research to identify factors related to teacher effectiveness. His conclusions are that the wide variety of experiences made possible through the postdoctoral fellowship year are beneficial in broadening a researcher's outlook. (RT)

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Subject: Report: USOE Postdoctoral Fellowship, 1968-69.

By: Lloyd Crisp

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Initial Summary

This is a report of activities during the postdoctoral fellowship year, 1968-69. Also included is a statement regarding the influence of the postdoctoral study on research and teaching during the last nine months.

Postdoctoral study was undertaken in two areas: nonverbal communication research and educational policy research. The people under whom I worked, along with their institutions and locations follow:

Dr. Paul Ekman
Studies in Nonverbal Behavior
Langley Porter Neuropsychiatric Institute
San Francisco, California

Dr. Willis Harmon
Educational Policy Research Center
Stanford Research Institute
Menlo Park, California

Generally, the time was divided between the two locations in the following manner: during the first half of the year, four days a week were spent in San Francisco, and one day was spent in Menlo Park; during the last half of the year, four days were spent in Menlo Park, with one day in San Francisco.

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Nonverbal Behavior Research

The first several weeks at Studies in Nonverbal Behavior were spent becoming familiar with the studies done by Ekman and his associates,

and reviewing related literature. Dr. Ekman uses still photographs, motion pictures, and videotapes to record data, and his laboratory includes computer-controlled video equipment for analysis of data. About three months was occupied with the following activities: learning about the research in progress; familiarization with the equipment and its use (for example, learning the keyboard code for computer control of various equipment functions); learning the categories for coding nonverbal behavior of the face, body, hands and feet; and learning to recognize such behavior (including, for example, the identification of micro-expressions embedded in other expressions which occur in a fraction of a second). This training was done by attempting to code all of the nonverbal behavior of the face and body of subjects who were filmed while watching brief stressful motion pictures, and again filmed later when they were trying to deceive a person regarding their feelings while watching the stress films.

Later I worked on a project intended to facilitate the recognition of facial displays of affect by presenting various composits of the face (forehead and eyes, nose and mouth).

For the remainder of the year I attended seminars, briefings, and staff meetings, and began to design a study exploring the differences between individuals in their ability to interpret facial displays of emotion.

Educational Policy Research

For the first three months at the Educational Policy Research Center, I worked under the direction of Dr. Robert Kantor. During this

time I became familiar with the research activities at the Center, and conducted a literature search in the areas of group and family therapy for both theory and methodology which might have application to classroom communication. At that time, the staff and consultants at the Center were organized into various task forces. I was most interested in two groups, one dealing with student dissent and revolutionary forces in education, and the other which engaged in alternative futures forecasting. I worked until early February with these two groups, particularly with the group looking into student dissent.

It was during this time that the longest student and faculty strike in the history of higher education in this country occurred: Black and Third World students went on strike at San Francisco State College on November 6, 1968; and about one quarter of the faculty struck in early January, 1969. I had been associated with the college, as student and faculty member, for over a decade and know something of the issues and the individuals involved in the conflict. In short, I had considerably more than an academic interest in the San Francisco State crisis. Several individuals at the Educational Policy Research Center saw the San Francisco State College turmoil as a prototype of student protests which would occur throughout the country unless fundamental changes in attitudes and policies were made regarding a number of social and educational issues. I shared that view, and my involvement with the Educational Policy Research Center became more than originally anticipated during that time.

Beginning in March, I began working with Dr. Vivian Sherman, a consultant at the Center, on an exploration of an area which was labeled--for lack of a better term--"subtle variables"; classroom process variables

which were thought to significantly influence the quality of education but which had not been given attention by educational researchers. We began to look at teacher effectiveness as measured by such factors as congruence (attitudinal and behavioral consonance), contra-communication (referring to discrepancies between contiguous verbalizations, or between simultaneous verbal and nonverbal cues, or between two nonverbal cues), and expressiveness and involvement (indicators of subjective affective-attitudinal states). This research continued at the Center beyond the termination of the postdoctoral fellowship; I maintained an office at the Center until October, 1969.

Related Activities

I attended three professional conferences on fellowship study travel funds: 1) I chaired a panel on funded educational research at the Western Speech Association Convention in Salt Lake City; 2) I attended the National Educational Research Association Convention in Los Angeles; and 3) I read a paper at the Conference on Research Designs in General Semantics at Pennsylvania State University.

In addition, I was a participant in a two-day panel charged with exploration and the formulation of a position paper regarding field studies in communications research. The panel was a part of the Speech Association of America Summer Conference, held in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

In April or May, the Director of the National evaluation of Follow Through programs at the Stanford Research Institute invited me to help in the refinement of a classroom observation instrument. The following work was undertaken in the summer of 1969, and completed in August (Sherman, Crisp, and Olson, 1969): evaluation of the previous year's pilot effort;

formulation of a rationale for new observation categories; and field tests for establishing reliability and validity of the new instrument.

During the summer, Mat Miles, another postdoctoral fellow, and I worked with several staff members at the Stanford Research Institute in planning and conducting a three-day workshop on organizational communication for administrators, faculty, students, and staff of several Bay Area junior colleges.

Finally, I directed four master's theses during the spring semester and the summer of 1969.

Influence of the Postdoctoral Fellowship Experience

The postdoctoral work has had profound influence on my professional life. The quality of people I worked with, and the diversity in content and research methodologies I encountered, made the year extremely challenging, broadening, and exciting. There is no question in my mind that the year was far more beneficial and much more influential than my doctoral work. During the year I felt considerable uneasiness about not becoming more involved in any one of a number of interesting research areas to which I was exposed. I am now, nine months after the fact, very secure in the view that breadth rather than narrow specialization was precisely what was needed to wrench me away from a number of dogmas which limited both the area and the methodology of my own research and teaching.

As a direct result of the postdoctoral year, the following changes in my interests and committments come readily to mind: I am far more

committed than before to interdisciplinary research and teaching; and I am currently conducting research and teaching in areas which I would not have attempted without the postdoctoral fellowship experience. For example, Dr. George Araki, Department of Cellular Physiology at San Francisco State, and I developed and introduced an experimental graduate seminar in intrapersonal communications theory which we team-taught during the spring semester. The course was subsequently approved by the School and is now a part of the regular course offerings in the Speech Department. Dr. Araki will teach the course next year at Waseda University, Tokyo, Japan, and he and I are planning joint research related to the course based on data collected in Japan and this country.

I feel extremely fortunate in being selected for the postdoctoral fellowship program. It was the most rewarding academic experience in my professional life.

Sincerely,

Lloyd Crisp

Lloyd Crisp, Chairman
Department of Speech
San Francisco State College

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